

Zion Church: A Brief Look Into
"The House That God Built"
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For 100 years, Zion Church has stood by faith, hard work, determination and most of all, by the Hand of God!!

Born in the independent rural borough of Vailsburg, New Jersey in 1898, where electricity was the new invention, separation of the races was heavily in force and cement roads could have been just a figment of someone's imagination, Zion Church was established. Because of the need to form a Protestant Church sought by the German Evangelical Synod of North America, the organization brought in Reverend William Frenzen to become one of the first of a total of nine clergy heads of Zion Church.

Sitting amidst a community of dairy farmers and bordering woodlands, Zion Church, rich in German history, went through a series of changes. After the purchase of 15-17 Alexander Street in 1899, the building foundation was laid; electricity was added, the interior was decorated, a pipe organ was purchased and installed and in 1919, the adjoining parsonage was an additional blessing. Even the name changed a few times through the years. Beginning with The German Evangelical Zion Congregation of Vailsburg it was changed to the Zion Evangelical and Reformed Church and then finally to its present Zion United Church of Christ. Zion Church has been around for many historical events, as you can imagine.

During World War II, 76 men and women of Zion served their country in the armed forces. However, only four never returned.

All through the 100 year journey of Zion Church, its programmatic legacy has become an impressive view of the work of God. Programs such as the Women's Guilds, national day prayers, The Young People's League, The 3-M Club and the Ladies Auxilliary in addition to a whole host of other life changing services were formed. Zion Church was a top contributor to the kingdom of God in its services to mankind. Today, that tradition has not changed. In fact, under the very impressive guide of the Reverend Loretta P. Smith-Koffi, Senior Pastor, Zion Church is working to become an intregal part in the rebuilding of the city of Newark. By being the first African American and the first woman to shepard Zion Church, she has become a piece of walking history in her own right. By looking at the need to go into the streets and literally take the kingdom by force, Reverend Koffi has been prepared to do just that. Through Hope Academy, a Christian Alternative High School and learning institute, the dedication to **properly** educate its community and help it maintain a healthy Godly way of living is unwavering. With the various support groups already in full action, (i.e. Zion Soup Kitchen, Food and clothing distribution, Youth & Young Men's Ministries, Men and Women Ministries, Community Out-Reach Program, regular Bible Studies. Minister Training courses, etc.) this community has been infiltrated by the power and spirit of God.

We do not take this 100 year commemoration lightly. We believe that God has purposely planted and given this very foundation to his people for this time of empowerment. We pray that God will, in his perfect will, continue to let Zion Church stand yet for **another** 100 years. We are honored to be in his midst.

By faith and His grace, we continue to move forward. To God be **all** the Glory!!